

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

OMB-01 /069 W

-----080422Z 063001 /22

R 070839Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2493

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, MPOL, KS, US

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS OF ARMY SECRETARY ALEXANDER AND ACTING  
ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF KERWIN TESTIMONY BEFORE ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE

1. MARCH 6 EDITIONS OF BOTMRMAJOR KOREAN ENGLISH  
NEWSPAPERS GAVE FRONT PAGE HEADLINE COVERAGE TO TESTIMONY  
OF ARMY SECRETARY, CLIFFORD ALEXANDER, AND ACTING ARMY  
CHIEF OF STAFF, GEN. HALTER T. KERWIN, BEFORE HOUSE  
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE REGARDING NEED FOR CONTINUED US  
TROOP PRESENCE IN KOREA.

2. BOTH KOREA TIMES AND KOREA HERALD CARRIED STORIES  
COMPILED FROM WIRE SERVICES REPORTING THAT BOTH  
ALEXANDER AND KERWIN WARNED ANY PRECIPITOUS CHANGE IN  
THE PRECARIOUSLY BALANCED FORCES IN KOREA, PARTICULARLY  
WITH RESPECT TO THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE, WOULD HAVE  
AN UNSETTLING AND POTENTIALLY DESTABILIZING EFFECT.  
ARTICLES NOTE ALEXANDER AND KERWIN TESTIMONY APPEARS  
TO BE CLEAR INDICATION OF THE U.S. ARMY'S OBJECTION TO  
A PULLOUT OF THE SECOND INFANTRY DIVISION. IN RESPONSE  
TO SUBSEQUENT QUESTION, ALEXANDER REPORTED TO HAVE  
STATED THAT THE DECISION TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM KOREA  
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HAD NOT BEEN MADE AND THAT IT WAS A POLITICAL MATTER  
TO BE ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT CARTER AFTER CONSULTATIONS  
WITH BOTH JAPAN AND KOREA. REMAINDER OF ARTICLES CITED  
ROLE OF U.S. TROOPS TOWARDS MAINTENANCE OF REGIONAL  
SECURITY AND UNPREDICTABLE MILITARISTIC NATURE OF NORTH  
KOREAN REGIME.

3. KOREA VERNACULAR PAPERS HAVE ALSO GIVEN FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO TESTIMONY OF ALEXANDER AND KERWIN. HAN'GUK ILBO AND TONGA ILBO BOTH RAN DISPATCHES FROM THEIR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS ON MARCH 5, SUBSTANTIALLY AS ABOVE.

4. IN ADDITION, HAN'GUK ILBO RAN STORY ON NDP HEAD YI CH'OL-SUNG'S MEETING IN HONOLULU WITH ASSISTANT CINCPAC LEROY J. MENOR (PHONETIC), QUOTING LATTER AS SAYING "THERE HAS BEEN NO DETAILED DECISION FOR REDUCTION OF USF/K. IF, IN FUTURE, US GROUND FORCES ARE REDUCED, AIR AND NAVAL FORCES WILL NOT BE."

5. SEVERAL SATURDAY PAPERS ALSO PUBLISHED TONGYANG ITEM FROM WASHINGTON NOTING THAT, DESPITE PLANS FOR

WITHDRAWAL OF USF/K, BUDGET REQUEST FOR MILITARY CONSTRUCTION IN FISCAL YEAR (FY) 1978 (AT \$27.5LAMILLION) IS TWICE LEVEL OF FY 1977. ARTICLE CITES TESTIMONY MARCH 4 BY WILLIAM WRAY, US ARMY ASSISTANT CHIEF OF ENGINEERING.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE PERTINENT PORTIONS OF ALEXANDER/KERWIN TESTIMONY VIA WIRELESS FILE.  
STERN

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PFOR, SOPN, MPOL, KS, US, (ALEXANDER, CLIFFORD), (KERWIN, HALTER T)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009